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AMERICAN

SQUARES

A Magazine
Dedicated to
American Square
Dancing



May, 1951

THE LADIES' CHAIN

Price 15c



What's the Answer? Rounds vs. Squares!



I'm all primed today to write something on the round dance situation. Then when I get to thinking about the ramifications of that subject my thought strays immediately to the square dance field. In both fields now we have what is commonly referred to as "New Dancitis." Idaho has been slow to take up round dancing, using only a few of the older, more familiar ones, such as the Varsovian and Schottische and some two-step variations. We are getting along pretty well, learning the fundamentals of square dancing. Then, WHEW! a flood of new squares and breaks came. Most clubs, unless they hire a professional caller, are in no position to keep abreast of the large mass of material that is being distributed, in various ways, throughout the country. Dances distributed, via the record route, are very often misinterpreted. A Texas dance done in Montana, for example, without benefit of knowledge of Texas styling, would not be recognized.

Now comes an avalanche of rounds. For those who are ready; its wonderful! Each dance that a person learns and masters, makes the next one that much easier. The great majority of the square dancers in many localities, however, are square dancing because they have not been inclined to take the time to learn round dance fundamentals and variations. A caller and instructor who puts on a square dance program and bores one-third or more of his floor with round dance instruction is "headed up a blind canyon."

What's the answer? Here are a few ideas.

ROUNDS vs SQUARES! WHAT'S THE ANSWER?

1. As in every other situation with which man is commonly confronted, use common sense! Know your dance, whether it be a square or round. Know it perfectly enough so that you can teach it concisely and authoritatively. If you don't know it yourself, say so. The dancers will detect it immediately anyway.

2. With beginners and intermediate groups, give it to them in small doses. Use the most simple round dances to get them accustomed to using their feet in the various ways necessary to execute the steps in coordination with other parts of the anatomy. Don't "crowd" them on rounds at a square dance.

3. When enough people become interested in rounds, have round dance work shops for that purpose primarily and encourage them to attend round

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It's Not Always Up to the Caller

By PAUL HUNT



It has often occurred to me that square dancers are not always getting as much fun out of a certain dance as they deserve. That is not always the fault of the caller, but due rather to a certain rigidity of style which the dancers feel they must adhere to. I am not talking now to beginners in square dancing, but to those dancers who have had enough experience to recognize the difference between a fast dance and a slow one, an Eastern style and Western style, a dance that is mostly buzz swings and a dance whose swings should be made with quick, once around forearm turns. Believe me, there is a difference, not only in the style of calling, but in the style of dancing.

Perhaps right here I should stop to amend the statement that the caller is not always to blame. The caller is certainly at fault if his dancers do not know of the various styles, for to give them that knowledge is the rightful duty of a caller who is, at the same time, a teacher and a leader. But a certain amount of common sense and dancing perception is also to be expected from the dancer. With the knowledge of different styles of dancing in his possession, it is certainly not going to be too great a strain on the mentality of the dancer to realize that, having just finished with Red River Valley and now being about ready to do the Susie Q, here is something different; that now the caller will have to change his style a bit and so will the dancers.

It is certainly not my intention, at this time, to attempt to teach these various styles. If you don't know them already put the bee on your caller. Get behind him with a little verbal pin and push hard. Perhaps he's sleepy and self-satisfied too. But let's do look for a moment at what we will have to do to get the most enjoyment out of these two grand dances. Let's look first at something you may want to do but that is not absolutely necessary. That is the step itself. Red River Valley is a singing call and a visiting couple dance. Because it is a visiting couple dance, the two couples who are active at any one time can take just about as much room for the figure they are doing as they feel like taking. So the ordinary walking step universally used in Eastern square dancing, feels just dandy. But—let's see what happens in the Susie Q. Everyone is active at the same time. We have a formation of two lines of four facing across the set. The call comes: "The opposite with the right and the right all around, partner with the left and the left all around." Now we find that in doing the two parts of that call we have two different distances to travel, those two distances supposedly to be traversed in the same number of counts and with the same number of steps. From your starting point to your opposite is a considerable distance, but when you turn to your partner you will find that she (or he) either has her nose imbedded in your collar bone, or has swung out at full arms length in her turn and is now some distance to your rear. Consequently you both run three, slide two, backtrack one, and finally turn by the left hand. I suggest that a change of step from four walking steps to a step, step, step-close-step, (like a two-step) will help immensely. After all you're dancing, aren't you? Who says you have to walk all the time? Remember, you are an experienced dancer. But I did say, also, that you might want to do this but that it wasn't absolutely necessary. It is obvious that walking steps can be shortened or lengthened as the necessity arises.

Now let us see what is necessary. When you did an allemande left in Red River Valley, you probably grasped your corner with the left hand very much as though you were shaking hands with an old friend while holding the baby under your right arm. Then at full arms length you swung out to the outside extremities of the set, (no doubt crashing bumpers with someone in the set next to you as you did so) and came to rest with your right heel on the floor, your toe pointing Heavenward, and already to make a graceful (?) leap toward your partner to go on with a grand right and left. You might get by with it in Red River Valley, but not in the Susie Q. Here the hand turns come oftener and faster, and the number of crashes would become catastrophic. Here is a Western dance, and the turns must be done either with a shortened forearm grip, or a hand grip with the forearm at right angles to the upper arm and the partners elbows touching. Change your grip on the turns and watch the dance become a smooth flowing thing, beautiful to see and a pleasure to do.

One more thing to illustrate the point I am trying to make. That is the promenade. There are at least three commonly used positions for the promenade; the skating position, the Varsouvienne, and the arm around the waist. All three are good, but no one is good for everything. My dancers use all three—choosing the one which best fits the figure just preceding the promenade. One of the saddest of all sights to be seen at a square dance is that of a man giving his left hand to a lady with whom he has just been instructed to promenade. They are facing in opposite directions. The couple behind them is just about to run over them and they know they have to move. So they start walking, one of them moving backwards. They know that one of them has to turn around. But which one? They both turn around and now are still facing in opposite directions. They get that straightened out, but by this time they are halfway around the set. The man knows he should place his right hand in the lady's right hand just to make a pretty picture. He tentatively places his hand at her waist and finds nothing there but a floating rib. Her hand at this time is being held shoulder high so that they can assume the Varsouvienne position. So the man moves his hand up to her shoulder, but at the same time, the lady having felt the tickle in the vicinity of her lower ribs, moves her hand down. They are now three quarters of the way around the set. At last in desperation the man makes a lunge for that elusive hand and gets it, but he has leaned over too far and the last three steps of the promenade are finished with the lady carrying the man on her left shoulder. Alright, so I am making a poor attempt to be funny, but honestly now, haven't you seen it happen almost exactly that way many times?

Let's have a look at some of the situations that cry out in a loud voice for a certain promenade position. Just being natural is the thing that does it. Suppose you are swinging with a waist swing when the call comes to promenade. The man's right arm is already around the lady's waist, and she is supposed to be on the right side of the gentleman. What could be more natural and more graceful than just finishing the swing to face in the direction you want to go, the man's arm remains around the lady's waist, you both let go with the other hand and you walk happily around the set?

Now for a situation that calls for a different promenade. Suppose you are doing a grand right and left. The call, "Meet your honey and promenade her home." You meet your partner by joining right hands. This time there's no doubt that it is the lady who has to turn around and walk in the opposite direction. So she just naturally makes a half left-face turn and backs up into

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AMERICAN SQUARE SCHOOLS

"Every once in a while we are forced to do things that are distasteful to us but which we have to do for the good of the public."

These words, spoken by Charley at the end of lunch on Tuesday started the trial of the State v. Sarge, a trial that is destined to take its rightful place among the famous trials of history.

Accused of running Jimmy's pants up the flagpole Sarge, our beloved cook who turned out the best meals a square dancer ever tasted, was defended by Andy Kleitsch. However, Doc McCune, judged by the result, must be the better lawyer for Sarge was convicted by the jury, foremaned by Luther Trow.

We must confess a strong suspicion that some of the testimony was slightly prejudured or that the jury was partly prejudiced (they sent out for a deck of cards). Certainly Mary Collette's testimony should have cleared Sarge. She swore she didn't see him run the pants up the flagpole, and Mary's word should have been enough for anyone.

This is only a sample of the good times we have had at the AMERICAN SQUARES SUMMER SCHOOLS entirely unconnected with the square dancing. Of course we have a good time learning square and folk dancing—that goes without saying, but when we're all together all the time we get to know each other and have good times independent of the main purpose of the camp. You will make friends at the schools that you will treasure for the rest of your life. Some of the people you'll meet are listed below.

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August 26th to September 4th

CAMP IHDUHAPI, Loretto, Minn.

Mrs. Sarah Foulkner, Virginia, Minn. LeRoy Fish, St. Paul, Minn., Allan P. Good, Hammond, Ind., Earl and Ethel Kneekt, Beloit, Wisc., Mr. and Mrs. Howard Mitchell, Louisville, Ky., Marie Normandin, Buhl, Minn., Melvin V. Rummel, Chicago, Ill., Henry and Emma Schleicher, Portage, Wisc.

You are welcome at any of the camps for part time, just drop in. However, to be on the safe side, we recommend that you send in your \$5.00 registration fee to American Squares at 121 Delaware Street, Woodbury, N. J., right away. The charge for the camps is \$55 for a week. Labor Day week end at Camp Ihduhapi will cost \$20 for two days and a half, the total time \$65.

Write for one of our illustrated camp folders and send us the names and addresses of any of your friends who might be interested and we'll send them folders too.



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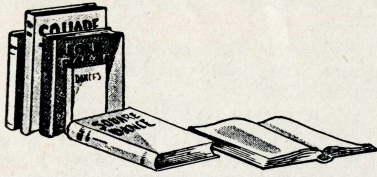


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Book Reviews

We do not stock reviewed books unless
specifically stated

THE SQUARE DANCE, Revised and Edited by Lawren (Bud) Bol, 1951. Chicago, Ill. Best-Ford Company. \$2.95.

When this first came out as the book written by the W.P.A. for the Chicago Parks, it was one of the best on the market and at the price (no profit because of the government service) could not be beaten. I am not prepared to say that Bud Bol has improved it.

He has revised it. Altho some of the additions represent the growth of square dancing. It also now contains such advanced dances as the Susie Q and the Texas Whirlwind and Cat's Miao. They make the new growth a bit lop-sided.

Nevertheless, the book is still a fine basic book. No book could explain the dances more thoroughly. No diagrams could be beautiful. (I note that Lawrence has eliminated my favorite illustrating Wave the Ocean. It's a great loss from an artists viewpoint tho not necessarily from a square dancers'.)

I seem to be bemoaning old time. Let me say that this book is still one of the finest basic books available. It has been improved by being brought up to date. It should be one of the foundations stones of a square dance library. Futhermore, we will sell you a copy at \$2.95. Now please reprint the companion book of fiddle tunes.

Charley Thomas

SO YOU WANT TO CALL SQUARE DANCES? by Tom Glenn. 1950. Douglas, Ariz. Privately printed by Tom Glenn. \$1.00.

Each teacher lists his own elements of good square dance calling. When I first started my unfinished book, I listed, as Tom Glenn does, **Desire** at the top of the list. Do you want to call square dancing?

Calling was so easy for me that it seemed that the poorer (not necessarily poorer than I) callers were just not trying. I found later, however, that it wasn't that Joe didn't want to call. He was simply lacking in rhythm—a thing I can't explain. It wasn't that Jack didn't want to become a caller (he is now an excellent one), he simply hadn't had my training in appearing before crowds and was simply diffident and nervous.

Sure, I wanted to be a caller, but I don't think that those who failed wanted to any less. For me it was natural: I loved being the center of attention. I enjoyed bossing people around, I had an excellent sense of rhythm, my voice had been trained for public speaking, my ability to learn calls (some call it memory) was inherited and trained in the **Charge of the Light Brigade** and **Cremation of Sam Magee** schools. Perhaps others wanted to call more than I do but without the other natural abilities didn't make the grade. On the other hand I heard people who didn't want to call, forced to do so by club rules, make excellent callers. Charlie in particular developed a drawling style that had the dancers wild over him—but he didn't want to call. I suppose that lack of **Desire** kept Charlie from being the famous caller he might have been, but lack of **Desire** didn't keep him from being a good caller.

I finally dropped **Desire** from my list of requirements. It is associated with all the other items and covers them all.

Nevertheless, Tom Glenn lists as requisites of a good caller: **Desire**, **Rhythm**, **Voice**, **Personality**, **Knowledge** and **Command** in that order. Only three and a quarter pages deal with how to call square dances. The rest of the 52 pages contain calls.

Charley Thomas

PROGRAMS

The problem of getting out a program of our own has lead to the idea of a review of the programs sent us. This review is for the purpose of passing on the good ideas of one group for the use of others.

NORTHEASTERN OKLA. SQUARE DANCE ASSN. 4th ANNUAL SQUARE DANCE FESTIVAL. Financed by advertisements this includes on the inside cover a list of clubs and a two-color map showing the location of the clubs.

It lists officers and the call in full of each dance called with the name of the caller. The inside back cover contains a brief glossary. Program chairman: Carl Leonard.

THE FOURTH ANNUAL OHIO FOLK FESTIVAL. This contains a history of previous festivals on the 2nd page. Dances are listed without breaks—did they dance continually? Chairman: John B. Clark, Jr.

Other programs received: **THIRD ANNUAL SPRING DANCE FESTIVAL,** Weiser, Idaho; **17th ANNUAL NATIONAL FOLK FESTIVAL,** St. Louis, Mo.; **SEVENTH ANNUAL NEW ENGLAND FOLK FESTIVAL,** Cambridge, Mass. (Quite a collection of notables present). **SQUARE DANCE JAMBOREE,** Rock Island, Ill. **SPRING DANCE FESTIVAL, NEW JERSEY SQUARE DANCE CALLER'S TEACHER'S ASSN.,** Newark, N. J.



Meet Burt Hall, our newest associate editor from 7302 Love, Detroit 9, Michigan. Burt is another one of these fortunate people who didn't have to be introduced to square dancing. He has been square dancing for as long as he can remember and calling for about 30 years. He is vice-president of the Michigan Square Dance Leaders Assn. and has been active in their camp.

When I wrote him for information about himself he asked that we give a plug to his demonstration group, the Calico Eight from the Wolverine State and his orchestra, Fred Sarchet and his Michigan Rangers. He's that kind of a guy.

Once, however he writes that he wasn't such a popular guy. It seems he was dancing duck and dive the length of the hall. In going up and down a lady's hair became entangled with the buttons on his coat. He kept on going and she had to follow, reluctantly.

We're sure he'll do as good a job with **AMERICAN SQUARES.**



What's the Answer?

(Continued from Page 2)

dance classes, set up for that primary purpose. This will lead into "round dance nights" for some groups; and Round Dance Festivals.

4. My main point is: Let's don't lose our square dancers! Unless some care is exercised to distinguish between square and round dance enthusiasts, we stand to lose the support of many square dancers, and the fun that comes from Square Dancing is "how come all this big ruckus started in the first place!" Let's don't contribute to retrogression!

Now let's hear from you.

Gus Empie

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The Oracle

BY JOHN ZAGORIEKO

Q—I have a record of the "Fireman's Polka" for which I am told there is a round dance. Could you give me the directions? Loren Parker, Wenatchee, Washington.

A—Maybe we're ignorant but outside of the standard polka's, we cannot suggest any special round dance for the tune mentioned. Perhaps someone has invented a version that is used colloquially. Can anyone tell us where?

Q—Do you have the calls for the dance "Battle Hymn of the Republic" on Foster's Calling Cards? Eleanor Wolford, Toledo, Ohio.

A—No. However, since you wish to have the call, we are printing it below. If you wish the record, we have it at 89c.

First Lady promenade the inside of the ring, First lady promenades inside
When you get back home you give your man a ring cew and swings partner.
great big swing.

You step right out and face about,
The side couples fall in.

The ladies go right the men go left,
You march around the ring

The first ole couple do-sa-do, you do-sa-do your own,

The next couple do-so-do, you do-sa-do your own,

The next couple do-so-do, you do-sa-do your own,

The last couple do-sa-do, you do-sa-do your own.

Everybody forward and back and I'll tell you the reason why,

It's forward again and pass right thru

And look your gal in the why.

You step right up and swing your own.

You swing her till she cries.

The allemande left on the corner

And a right hand to your own.

Glory, glory, hallelujah

Glory, glory, hallelujah,

Glory, glory, hallelujah,

As we go marching home.

Glory, glory, hallelujah, etc.

Q—Will you please tell me how to do "Hot Pretzels?" Isabelle Barden, Lebanon, N. H.

A—Directions for the dance can be found in your Jan. 1949 American Squares.

Q—Where can I obtain the directions and music for the Oklahoma Mixer? Paul Bleau, Nito, W. Va.

A—Directions for the dance can be found in Square Your Sets and in Dancin' A Round, which we sell for one dollar each. A progressive schottische similar to it is described in Dance A While, Pitman & Swenson, \$2.50. Any good schottische not too fast will do for music.

Last month we got stalled on a question and asked for help. We got plenty. We were a bit chagrined to learn that the answer reposed no further than the book shelves at our back, but we welcomed the many pleasant letters. Except for minor variations, the calls received were almost identical. We publish here the dance asked for by Miss Mary Hamilton of Bessemer, Ala.



RED RIVER VALLEY

(Sing call for Circle Dance)

Now you lead right down to the valley

And you circle to the left and to the right.

Then you swing with that girl from the valley

And you swing with your Red River girl

Now you lead right on down the valley

And you circle to the left and to right.

Now the girls form a wheel in the valley

And the gents do-sa-do so polite

Oh you lead right on down the valley
 Circle first to the left, then the right,
 Now you lose that girl in the valley
 Then you lose your own Red River Girl.

Formation: Gent with lady on each side holding inside hands, facing similar group of the same number. Any number of sets of six in a large circle around the room.

Directions: On the first verse, each set of three moves forward and passes to the left of the facing set, keeping lines generally parallel. Joining hands in a circle with the next set, they circle to the left four steps, then back to the right. Gent then swings the girl on his left and then swings the girl on his right. Joining hands with the girls for the second verse, each gent and his partners once again pass to the left of the facing trio and circles with the next group they meet. The girls wheel around with a right and star and quickly fall back to place as the gents do a do-sa-do, also quickly. For the third verse, the sets of three pass to the left again to meet a new set. They circle as before and then upon direction the left hand ladies move diagonally across the set and exchange places. Then the right hand ladies exchange places and the dance is finished, to be repeated as many times as desired.

The above directions are a sort of consensus of the many we received. Some suggested the groups pass to the right, others to pass right through. Some indicated the right hand girl to be swing and exchanged first. Mrs. John Hardy suggested that where dancers are experienced the left hand ladies twirl CW and the right hand ladies twirl CCW when exchanging places in verse three. Bill Muench of St. Ann's, Mo., forms his sets by sending all the men on one side of the room and the girls on the other. At a signal, the gents rush across the room and acquire two girls each. Some get left, of course.

Besides the folks mentioned, we wish to thank for their assistance Fred Collette, Edith Brooks, Lee Waddell, Roger Eckgren, Norm Hillye, Ernie Loeb, Russell Stedinger, Mrs. Gertrude Lang, H. J. Scarborough, Harvey Lebrun, Frank Knipp, Lon Price, Bill Fox, Walter Meier, M. L. Van Winkle, Mary Ross, and John Bellamy. Thanks very much for your letters, folks. In looking over the addresses of the people who wrote us, we observed that we received a reply from every section of the country except the South West. Isn't this dance done there?

We received from Radio Station WWVA, Wheeling, West Virginia, a request for information that would aid them in starting a projected weekly squared dance to be sponsored jointly with the Wheeling Park Commission. Will experienced callers in that vicinity please get in touch with Mr. Frank P. Sanders, c/o the station, to offer their advice and services?



We've received **Swing Your Partner!** the bulletin of the Westchester Square Dance Association, editor Lois Keeler. It includes a schedule of future square dances and a list of available callers and orchestras.



ED DURLACHER

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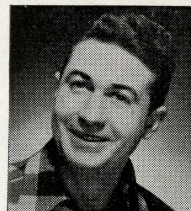
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LETTERS

Dear Charley:

Anyone must agree with Mary Collette that fun is the primary consideration in dancing. Since most of the articles in American Squares are written by dance leaders, I would like to present the viewpoint of one who attends more dances than he leads. A caller who is always on the other side of the microphone may have a different idea of fun. He may not call contras, for example, because they present no challenge to the CALLER.

To me a dance program would be ideal if it 1—contained a number of good dances sufficiently well-known so that I knew how to do them correctly and enjoyably, 2—contained some dances which I could learn for future enjoyment, 3—possessed the variety given by dances of various nationalities. For example, I would like to see such dances as English Newcastle and Czech Beseda on a square dance program. These dances are easier than Texas Tornado, but they would add tremendously to any dance program if the dancers could do them. Obviously the dancers could not do them unless everyone's conception of these dances were the same. If a leader were to waste sufficient time to teach these dances incorrectly, then the unfortunate dancers would not be able to enjoy these dances with the groups that have been dancing correctly for many years.

By teaching incorrect dances, a leader can change an enjoyable dance into a rat race. I can't resist using one of my favorite callers as an example. Like all good callers he insists that American square dances be done properly. A little reflection should tell him that other people feel just as strongly about seeing their traditional dances done correctly. Nevertheless, he teaches a version of Road to the Isles that causes anyone who attempts to do the dance correctly to be repeatedly bumped by people going the wrong way. It's unfortunate that an evening of excellent square dancing should be marred by failing to apply the same standards of correct traditional dancing to European dances that are applied to American square dances. It might be pointed out in this connection that the stamping which some people put in Road to the Isles is also entirely out of keeping with the spirit of Scottish dancing. Can you imagine three resounding stamps at the end of a ladies chain? Well that's how the stomp version of Road to the Isles sounds to me.

I'm not proposing "standardization" of folk dancing. There are many authentic versions of a number of folk dances, just as there are many versions of American square dances. But these dances are authentic by virtue of the fact that they were developed by native dancers who know and respect their own dance traditions. The authentic dances therefore reflect the style of that nationality to an extent which a counterfeit never can.

Many professional leaders who can't leave their own dances, don't realize that their dancers, because of a freer evening schedule, are frequently in a better position to learn and appreciate a wider variety of dances than the leaders themselves. Many leaders don't seem to realize that experienced dancers don't like to see their favorite dances improperly taught by leaders who have no feeling for the unique character of the nationality which developed the dance. By modifying dances, either consciously or unconsciously, the well-meaning choreographer destroys the national distinctiveness of the dance. He thereby eliminates from his dance program much of the variety which he set out to achieve. Doing the same twirls, stamps, claps, two-steps, etc., in the same Americanized style, but merely in a different order and to a different piece or organ music does not constitute variety. Real variety is found in the various nationality dances if each is done in its own peculiar style. Modification invariably reduces the style to that of the modifier, even though he himself doesn't recognize it. At best the modified dances are undistinguished; at worst they can be as offensive as a jazzed-up version of Silent Night.

For our convenience in being able to do and enjoy the dances, for the preservation of the good traditional dances, for a square dance program with balance and variety, but primarily for more fun give us more AUTHENTIC folk dances.

Stuart Hamilton, Hartford, Conn..



Kenny Best writes that he has been corresponding with callers in Arkansas and now would like to include callers from a greater area. If you'd like to exchange letters with Kenny, write him Box 267, North Little Rock, Ark.

Dear Mr. Thomas,

In the Oct. 1950 issue of American Squares under "the Oracle" Fred Bosworth of Scarsdale, N. Y. wanted calls for "Hiawatha" and "Silver Bell." At the time I had the same difficulty but have since worked out calls that I like for each one and wondered if he would like to have them. I find the calls you print very useful and suggestive.

For "Hiawatha" I fitted a dance I have heard Ralph Page use, tho I do not know if it originated with him. The timing is tricky, not for the dancers but for the caller but it gives good breathing time.

Honor to your partners & your corners all
Swing your honey up & down you swing her round the hall
Promenade your partners all around the ring
O you promenade that pretty girl back home.
Now you do-si-dos your corners & you do-si-dos your own,
Swing your corner ladies all, you swing 'em all alone,
Come back home & swing your own,
Swing your honey up & down,
First couple ready—

First couple separate, go half way round the outside track.
When you meet you do-si-dos around your own,
Then you take her in your arms & swing her up & down,
And you promenade that pretty girl back home.
Now a left hand round your corners all,
A right hand round your own,
Corners do-si-dos,
Then you come back home and swing your own,
Swing your honey all around,
Next couple ready—

Repeat for each couple. Repeat record and call the same thing for the 2 head couples at once and the 2 side couples at once then for all the couples at once and finish with any conclusion or none.

For "Silver Bell" I use Head Couples Ladies Chain altho I do not think it has as good a swing as Derlachers Coming Round the Mountain call.

Introduction—

Allemande left on the corner & a right to your own,
A grand right & left,
All around the ring (8 beats no call)
When you get home you swing,
You swing your own.
Now you do-si-dos your corners & you do-si-dos your own,
Take your partner with you and you promenade her home (8 beats)
You promenade your little Silver Bell.
Head couples Ladies chain, the sides swing,
You chain those ladies over
Now chain 'em back again,
Side couples ladies chain, the heads swing,
You chain those ladies over & back again.
Now you do-si-dos your corners & you do-si-dos your own,
Take your corner lady & You promenade her home (8 beats)
Promenade your new little Silver Bell.

Call 4 times.

The record has 5 repeats and I use the introduction or start with the figure and use the introduction for a conclusion.

Hope this proves helpful to Mr. Bosworth.

Eleanor R. Beyer, Brunswick, Maine.



Dear Friends:

There has been much discussion pro and con regarding my article on "Cow Contras" or "Western Longways" which appeared in **American Squares**. This has both surprised and embarrassed me, inasmuch as I had not offered it in any attempt to change the time-honored and correct ways of performing both contras and squares. It was frankly an experiment that I have tried on no other group other than the one mentioned. That they liked it surprised me more than you imagine. (We still do the standard contras and squares—this is just something "extra".)

Contra dance leaders who have taken exception to my "cow contra" may possibly have done so from the impression that I was making changes in the style of the Contra. Actually, this has very little to do with the contra, as such. It

was designed as a way to do SQUARE DANCING in contra formation. Perhaps it was unfortunate that I called it "longway" or "contra" in naming the dance. But what else can it be called? However, after doing square dancing in this formation—we can swing into a contra without the necessity of re-grouping the dancers or loss of time. When we do a contra, I assure you, they are in regulation style...with the exception that we do not progress down the line (obtaining variety by using more than one contra figure instead of changing partners). And this latter exception we hope to discontinue as the contra figures gain in popularity.

As for the highly disputed "cast off" figure—remember we are attempting to do square dancing at this point—not contras. This device (which is the same cast-off used in Virginia Reel) is merely designed to include the popular Grand Right and Left figure—which is admittedly awkward from this formation. To add to our hodge-podge we have added many figures from the English country dances (such as the "Hey"). Many may shout "horrors", but we like it and have fun with it, and are quite content to be considered "curious eccentrics."

If anyone is seriously interested in trying it, please let me know and I'll send them full information. A full explanation of the technique was not possible in the limited space allowed in the magazine article.

Sincerely yours,

E. W. "Bish" Bischoff
Hayward, California



Dear Charlie:

You want directions for "Hunt the Squirrel" and Steamboat", well here they are. Am also enclosing directions for "Flowers of Edinburgh" a very delightful English Country Dance.

The directions for "Steamboat" were taken from "English Country Dances of Today" published by the Country Dances Society of America. The directions for the other dances were taken from Cecil Sharp's "Country Dance Book."

FLOWERS OF EDINBURGH

A longways—ladies on one side gents on the other couples 1, 3, 5, 7, etc. active. Do not cross over.

- A 1 First man does figure eight around second couple (crossing in front of around second lady and then around second man to place)
 - A 2 First woman do figure eight around second couple. (Crossing in front of and around second man then around second woman to place)
 - B 1 Second couple simultaneously do a figure eight around first couple (lady going in front of gent)
 - B 2 First and second couples swing and change places. (First couple has now progressed one couple down the set and repeats the dance with a new second couple & so on down the line).
- (The entire dance is done with a smooth slow polka step (step together, step hop).

HUNT THE SQUIRREL

Longways—(Ladies on one side gents on the other—Couples 1, 4, 7, 10 etc., active—do not cross over)

- A 1 1-4 First and second couples hands four clockwise. (Circle four)
5-8 First and second couples hands four counter clockwise.
- B 4 First man and first woman cast off below third couple and lead up the middle with right hands to second couples place. While second man and woman move into first couples place, take right hands and face down to meet first couple.
- A 2 Second and first couples facing each other lead down the middle (first couple falling backwards) and back.
- B 2 First and second couples swing and change places.
(A1, B1, & A2 are done with a walking step, B 2, is done with a smooth, slow polka or two-step)

THE STEAMBOAT

Longways—Ladies on one side gents on the other—do not cross over. Couples 1, 3, 5, 7 etc., active.

- A 1 First couple step in between second couple and all four link arms, move down the middle (eight steps) and retire backwards to place. (walking step)
- A 2 First couple, followed by second, leads down again. Second couple makes an arch. First couple passes under and, followed by second, leads up the middle to place. (walking step)

B 1 First and second couples right hands across and back with the left.
(walking step)

B 2 Couples swing and change places (each group of two). Smooth polka or two-step.

I am glad that you are starting to import HMV records. They certainly are superior recordings and I agree whole heartedly with your high "Thomas Ratings." Some people may think it queer to dance to a full orchestra but then there are those of us who think it queer dancing to organ music.

Gloria Hemmings, Hartford, Conn.



Dear Charley:

As you may have gathered, the Sally Goodin Club is very active. That is why we make a 50 mile round trip to dance with them now and then. At their Hal-love'en party (masks, costumes, 'n everything) their president, Tom Mullens, called what he said was a double square. After lining up an even number of squares on the floor he had all of the no. 1 men on one half of the floor move over and stand by the no. 1 men on the other side. Next the no. 1 women moved over. This continued until each square had 8 men and 8 women. Each pair of men made half a couple. Each man put his arm around the man beside him and each woman put her arm around the other half of herself. This left each "dancer" (double) with one (free) left and one right hand. The dance had to be slow but Tom called something like Half-sashay and form a ring, break that ring with a corner swing, etc. It didn't take long to get the idea and the dual personalities were soon doing allemande left, right and left grand and promenade with all the frills, twills, and flourishes.

At our club the other night they had a baloon dance. Each dancer was given a balloon to inflate and tie around his or her ankle with a piece of string. The idea was to break the other people's balloons without getting yours broken. The women with floor length skirts had a big disadvantage—you couldn't even see their balloon. Those having their balloons unbroken at the end of the trip were given prizes.

Just to enliven things they threw in a couple of SKATS during the balloon dance. In this idiocy the dancers (men or women) on the outside (as women in TEXAS STAR) when the caller yells SKAT—all dash over to another square, 'Twon't do for the staid traditional but it will break down reserve and enliven things. Such doings remind me of the German description in Dick's Quadrille Call Book—it seems they would try anything, too.

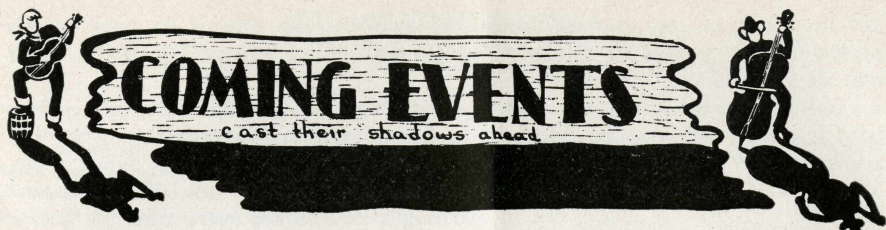
Another stunt is an oldie we thought we helped invent some six years ago in South Bend, Ind. and have since encountered in a number of places. Put two squares on the floor. One square has 4 men, 3 ladies, and a skirt (with nothing in it) The other square has 4 ladies, 3 men, and a broom. In other words one gent has a skirt for a partner and one woman has a broom for a partner. The dancers should be given no previous warning. The caller calls whatever he wants—the dancers must go thru their part of the dance and at the same time see that the skirt or broom keeps up and does its part correctly. The guy or gal who doesn't know his S/D soon shows it. Still—it is a bit confusing to decide what to do with that inanimate dancer when you start "Down the center and split the ring. If you pick partners for the broom and skirt who can be a little nutty the audience will get a big kick out of the deal. It is something to see a big 200 lb. man swinging his skirt partner with a blissfully happy look on his face.

We need some books—I am inclosing a list and a check. By the way—Rickey says Jennewein is excellent, be sure to get it.

Emmette and Virginia Wallace, Pasadena, Texas.



We've received announcements of Pinewoods Camp August 5th to 26th at Long Pont Buzzards Bay, Mass., sponsored by the Country Dance Society of America and of Herb Greggerson's classes, June 4th thru 8th, Ruidose, N. M. June 18th thru 22nd, Quinault, Wash. July 19th thru 13th (sic) Green Bay, Wisc. and August 27th thru the 31st, Ruidose, N. M. and of The Sixth Folkways Summer School, White Mountain Dance Center with Gene Gowing in charge.



- May 4: Chester, Vt. Country Dance Festival, High School Gym. Folk and square dances. Lawrence Loy, guest caller. 7:30.
- May 5: Princeton, N. J. Square Dance Festival and contest. High School Gym.
- May 13: Racine, Wisc. 2nd Annual Square Dance Jamboree Benefit Dance for underprivileged children. Johnny Toth, M. C.
- May 17, 18, 19. Wenatcher, Wash. Third Annual Folk & Square Festival.
- May 19: Detroit, Mich. Michigan Square Dance Leaders Assn. Second Annual Festival. Grand Ballroom of the Masonic Temple.
- May 20: Audubon Park, N. J. Square and Folk Dance Leaders of the Delaware Valley Jamboree. 3 p. m. and 7 p. m.
- May 25, 26: Durham, N. Hamp. Sixth Annual New Hampshire Folk Festival, New Hampshire Hall, U.N.H. Campus.
- May 25, 26: Boise, Idaho. Boise Music week and Fifth Annual Spring Round-up. Write Ken Cummings, 2620 Pleasanton, Boise, Idaho.
- May 27: Garden City, Long Island, N. Y. Long Island Square Dance Callers Festival. Adelphi College Gym. 2 p. m., 7 p. m.
- May 30: Bridgeport, Conn. Callers' Night and Jamboree. Ritz Ballroom. Tom Gamby, host caller, 8:30 p. m.
- June 2: Camden, N. J. Cover Dish Supper and Dance given by the Camden YMCA Square Dance Group to the Square & Folk Dance Leaders of the Delaware Valley.
- June 3: Allentown, Pa. 5th Annual Square Dance Jamboree. Castle Garden, Downey Park from 12 noon.
- June 9: St. Paul, Minn. Downtown YMCA. Ray Smith, guest caller.



Not the Callers' Fault

(Continued from Page 3)

the man's arms. His right hand is still joined with her right, his arm is now lying across the lady's shoulder. He takes her left hand in his and there you are, promenading in the Varsouvienne position. What could be easier or more natural? The secret here of course is in the lady making a left-face turn. If she makes the mistake of making a right-face turn, (and I assure you it is often done) she winds up with the man's arm lying uncomfortably across the bridge of her nose, or if she is a taller woman, perhaps resting just under her chin. This necessitates the man raising his arm up and over the lady's head. Quite frequently the head comes right up with the arm because the gentleman has forgotten to move his elbow away from the lady's chin before he starts the lift. So I say again, the secret of securing smoothness, gracefulness, and continuity of motion lie here in the lady's left-face turn.

The skating position comes most naturally from a situation where you have been making a series of hand turns followed by a promenade with either partner or corner. The Varsouvienne position is not too un-natural here insofar as getting into position is concerned, but the continuity of the figure is interrupted, whereas, if the skating position is used, another three quarter turn with the person to be promenaded moves you from the figure to the promenade in one continuous flow of motion. Most Western dances demand this position if the ultimate in beauty is to be obtained.

It is the most human thing in the world to crave variety. We want it in our meals, in our music, in our dancing. Hence the need for the caller to be well versed in the variety of styles, patterns and figures that stem from the

various parts of our country, and the need for the dancer to have in his possession the technic of dancing, for in the perfect square dance the caller and dancer are one.

And believe me I am not trying to say that we should spend all of our time learning new dances. Most of us know enough different dances to last a lifetime. We weary of them because we don't know how to dance them. We should spend our time making a thing of beauty out of the dances we know. Progress is made, not in learning a new figure every time we dance, but rather in making perfect our dancing. Again let me say it is not all up to the caller. As a good dancer we must learn where and when to do it and what to do. After all we don't want to make the poor caller include in his patter:

"When you meet your gal under this condition
You must promenade in Varsouvienne position."



Best Sellers for March, 1951

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 1. Charley Thomas: <i>Singing Calls.</i> | \$1.00 |
| 2. Frank Lyman: <i>One Hundred and One Singing Calls</i> | \$2.00 |
| 3. C. D. Foster: <i>Learn to Dance and Call Square Dances Part 1</i> | \$1.00 |
| 4. George & Marion Waudaby: <i>Square Your Sets</i> | \$1.00 |
| 5. Charley Thomas: <i>Twelve Homemade Square Dances</i> | \$.50 |
| 5. Les Gotcher: <i>Square Dancin'</i> | \$1.00 |
| 7. Charley Thomas: <i>Play as You Learn</i> | 10c, 10 for 8c, 13 for \$1.00 |
| 8. Dick Kraus: <i>Square Dances of Today</i> | \$3.00 |
| 9. C. D. Foster: <i>Learn to Dance and Call Square Dances Part II</i> | \$1.00 |
| 10. Jimmie Clossin: <i>West Texas Square Dances</i> | \$1.50 |

We should be glad to sell you any of these. On the other hand we urge you to write for our 1951 catalogue which lists these and many others.

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The Roundup

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Try These

We have had many complaints that these dances are not explained well enough. In sending these in please see that explanations are super adequate. In "The Gilmer Twister" I know we'll receive inquiries about "Eight to the Center with a dishrag wheel". It's standard in Texas, but I've forgotten it.

Contrary to the statement in the April issue, "The Mule Train, is not a singing call!



The Solomon Levi Do Si Do

Singing Call: Record MacGregor 614, Globe 5009

First ole couple separate
Around the outside track
Right hand round your partner
And you turn right back
A left hand to your partners (all)
And you do-pas-o the hall
Do-pas-o around you go
With partners & corners all.
The gents into the center
A right hand star you go
Right around to your partner
And you start the do-pas-o
With partners & corners its left & right
Until you meet your own
Four ladies chain across the ring
You chain 'em around alone
Four ladies chain right back again
Chain to your places all
And take that pretty little girl
And promenade the hall

Original by Bill McIlvain, Mt. Holly, N. J.

Charley Thomas will teach this at the American Squares schools this summer.



THE GILMER TWISTER

Patter Call—

1st & 3rd balance and swing
Separate go around the ring
Meet your honey and swing once more
Up to the center and couple up four
(Gents to left, ladies right
Around the outside)
(Meet in opposite position)

Circle four with a right hand cross
Back with the left and don't get lost
Corners all with a right half way round
Back with the left go all the way around
To your opposite lady as she comes down
And promenade that pretty gal around
(Original corner)
(Original opposite)

Form a ring, a great big ring
The gents step right and everybody swing
Allemande left just one
And promenade around with the gal you swung
(Explanatory)

Two head gents chain the ladies over
Now lead to the right and circle up four
I'll swing yours and you swing mine
Circle four and form a line
(The ladies with the head
gents)
(Stand four in line with lady
you started with)

Head ladies chain across the world
Eight to the center with a dishrag whirl
Now back up into place with your corner girl
(Ladies with head gents,
first change will be original
head ladies)

Gents now have original corners for partners.

Repeat for 1st and 3rd couples

Repeat twice for 2nd and 4th couples to get original partners back

Dance to position, not person.

(Original by JACK MEGGINSON, Gilmer, Texas)



POLKA BALLONET MIXER*

Mary and Fred Collette

Music: Hop Scotch Polka — Vic. 20-3520 (on other side of The Windmill's Turning) is fine. Emilia (Laughing) Polka — Vic. 1013, or other good polka music could be used.

Formation: Couples in circle, facing in LOD, in ROP, front-cross grasp (skater's)—R hand above L.

...**ABBREVIATIONS** — M—man or men; W—woman or women; R—right; L—left; fwd—forward; bwd—backward; LOD—line of direction; ROP—right open position; CW—clockwise

Meas.

Action

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 1, 2 | Two polka steps fwd (low polka or two-step) both begin on L. |
| 3, 4 | Walk fwd 4 steps—L, R, L, R. |
| 5, 6 | Two polka steps fwd |
| 7, 8 | Dropping L hand (keeping R), M walks fwd L, R, L, R, taking hand of fwd W while she does a quarter L turn in place, L, R, L, R. All M are now facing out and W facing in, all hands joined around circle. |
| 9 | One balance polka fwd on L (ballonet), M out, W in. |
| 10 | One balance polka bwd on R (ballonet), M in, W out. |
| 11, 12 | Dropping L hands, all turn with R hands CW, half revolution, in 4 steps L, R, L, R, and M takes L hand of W to rear. All M are now facing in and W facing out, all hands joined around the circle. |
| 13 | One balance polka fwd on L (ballonet), M in, W out. |
| 14 | One balance polka bwd on R (ballonet), M out, W in. |
| 15, 16 | Dropping R hands, M does a three-quarter L turn (while W does a quarter L turn) in place, stepping L, R, L, R, and joins R hands above L, in skater's position, ready to repeat the routine with a new partner. |

Always on the alert for really good circle mixers, we considered "Five Foot Two" and liked the ballonet part of it. However, it did not seem right to have only one set of walking steps in the routine — we knew that for balance there should be a repetition. So we arranged the foot-work to consist entirely of a set of two polka steps and a set of four walking steps, alternating, each set beginning with the left foot. This feels perfectly natural and it is much smoother to make the turns in this pattern on the walking rather than the polka steps.

Since we felt no enthusiasm for the piece, "Five Foot Two," and believed that others would not for any length of time, we did not use it, but found that with genuine polka music, gay, lively and exciting, this routine is delightful. As it is always easy to obtain excellent polkas, old and new, it is fine to have routines that will fit them.

—Mary and Fred Collette

Fred and Mary will teach this dance at Lincoln Memorial Univ. and Camp Farley this summer.



Several persons, including Bish Bishoff, Alpha W. Knipp and Howard Davison have called my attention to my omission of Folkraft 1094 in saying that there was no record of **Wearing of the Green**. (I was speaking of records without calls, Woodhull's was taken for granted.) I have Frank Kaltman's word that this was recorded for folk rather than square dancing and I didn't care for the instruments or the lilt for Woodhull's square dance. As previously stated, I used **MacNamara's Band**, either Krantz 1007 or Imperial 1143 for the dance and liked them so well that now I ask an orchestra for that tune for that figure. I must admit that my correspondants say they use this record for the square dance. We'll sell it to you for 89c.

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